



## **INTRODUCTION**

This element presents an overview of Leesburg's economy, primarily through an analysis of at-place employment, and an assessment of the resources available to the town to influence the course of economic development. The implementation program at the end of this element is intended to marshal those resources in a comprehensive effort directed toward achieving the broad objectives stated above.

For the Town of Leesburg, economic development means improving the quality of the local economy by employing our residents, increasing the diversity of businesses, and promoting new or expanding businesses. It also means enhancing the economic well-being of the community without negatively affecting the natural and urban environment. The following broadly stated goals provide direction for the economic development activities of the town:

- Retain and expand a diversified economic structure and employment base.
- Encourage additional employment opportunities for Leesburg residents.
- Sustain the town's fiscal health through a diverse and expanding commercial tax base.
- Create the viability of the historic downtown business district.
- Maintain Leesburg's role as the county's governmental and cultural center.
- Encourage expansion of the conference and tourism industry.

A 1990 data base is used in the overview because information for that year is consistently available for all of the areas discussed. General economic trends since 1990 have undoubtedly changed some aspects of the picture presented; the projections contained in this element attempt to take more recent trends into account.

## **ECONOMIC OVERVIEW**

### **Historical Perspective**

Leesburg's economy has historically revolved around its role as the county seat and as the service and trade center for Loudoun County. Growth in the metropolitan Washington, D.C., area over the past decade has provided both benefits and challenges to the town's economy. Service and trade activities, along with government functions, have grown with the population. Growth in other sectors of the town's economy has been uneven. Nevertheless, the town's status as a net "importer" of workers increased between 1980 and 1990, reflecting Leesburg's basic economic vitality.

The following statistics present an economic snapshot of Leesburg in 1990. In that year the town had:

- ***A resident labor force of 9,944 workers.*** About 40 percent held jobs in the town itself.
- ***An employment base of 10,344 jobs.*** Two-thirds of these jobs were in services, government employment, and retail trade.
- ***An employment payroll of about \$260 million.***
- ***Retail sales of more than \$250 million.***
- ***Professional billings of more than \$77 million.*** This included all fees charged by such professionals as attorneys, architects, engineers, doctors, dentists, etc.

### **At-place Employment**

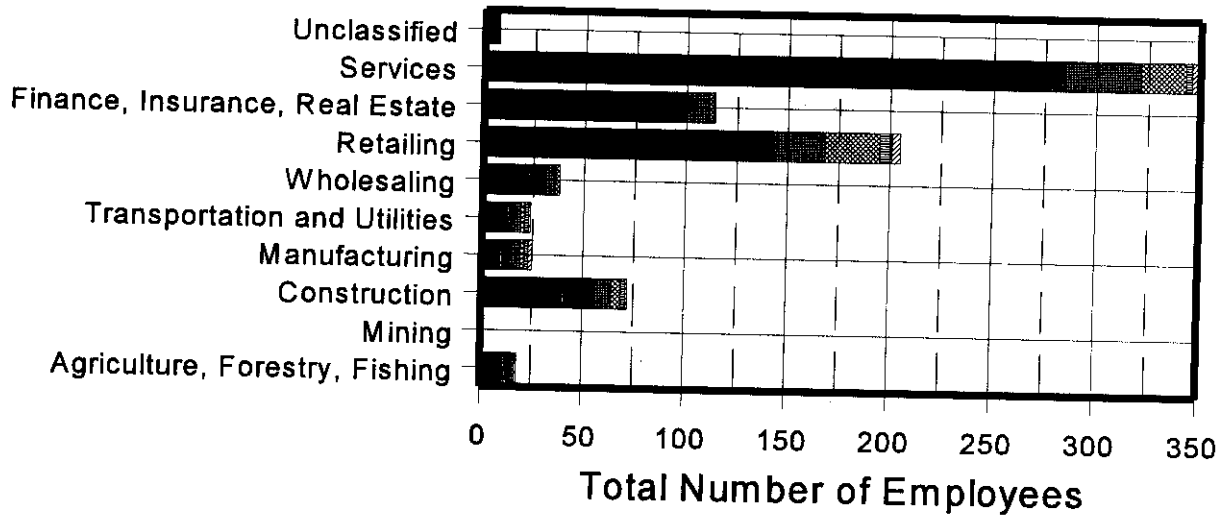
The 10,344 jobs in Leesburg in 1990 represented a 105 percent increase over 1980's figure of 5,050. Job growth thus exceeded the town's 94 percent increase in population for the same period. Over that decade, the service, trade and government employment components retained predominance in the local job market (68% in 1980 and 69% in 1990). Trends and shifts in the job mix were as follows:

- The fastest-growing industrial categories were construction (up 210%), trade (up 183%) and services (up 152%). It should be noted the construction component has been impacted by the subsequent decline in real estate development.
- Government jobs, while increasing in number by more than one-third, declined in overall importance, falling from 30 to 20 percent of all jobs in the local economy.
- The manufacturing and finance/insurance/real estate classifications retained their relative share of the job market.
- Transportation/communications/utilities and government (as noted above) lost share.
- Jobs in agriculture/forestry/fishing and in mining remained negligible.

The remainder of this section provides an analysis of Leesburg's job based on 1994 Virginia Employment Commission data.

The breakdown of Leesburg's 1994 job base is shown by standard industrial classifications in Figure 4.1, which also shows the size of businesses in each category.

**Figure 4.1**  
**Employment by Standard Industrial Classification**  
**and Business Size (1994)**



### Employees Per Establishment



Source: Virginia Employment Commission, 1994 data

Services constitute the largest job classification, with retailing second and finance, insurance, and real estate as a group third. Small firms (1 to 4 employees) by far outnumber the number of larger firms in all classifications.

**Table 4.1**  
**Major Employers in Leesburg (1996)**  
**(100 or more Employees)**

<u>Employer</u>	<u>Employees</u>
Loudoun County Government	868
Loudoun Hospital Center	800 <sup>1</sup>
Loudoun County Schools	589
Federal Government (FAA)	578
Barber & Ross Company	276
State Government	181
Giant Food, Inc.	164
Town Government	150
Walmart	145
Southern Electric Service Company	132
K-Mart Corporation	111
Hechingers	110
Bell Atlantic Telephone	110
Rehau, Inc.	122
Heritage Hall Health Care	100

*Source: Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments and  
Walmart and Hechinger store managers*

### Labor Force

In the 1990 Census, 9,844 Leesburg residents were in the labor force. This was a 96 percent increase over the 1980 figure of 5,023. Some characteristics of the labor force found in Census data are as follows:

- The labor force participation rate (percent of population 16 and over in the labor force) was 79.1 percent, roughly the same as other jurisdictions in Northern Virginia.
- Women constituted 47.5 percent of the labor force, with a participation rate of 71.1 percent. The labor force participation rate of women with children under 18 was even higher at 72.7 percent.
- The unemployment rate was 2.1 percent overall. Minorities, which comprised 13% of the total labor force, had an unemployment rate of 7.0 percent.

A breakdown of the 9,606 employed persons in the 1990 labor force by standard industrial classifications is shown in Figure 4.1. While the members of this resident work force did not necessarily work in Leesburg, the pattern of the worker mix is similar to that of the job mix, with the same three dominant components--services, trade, and government employment.

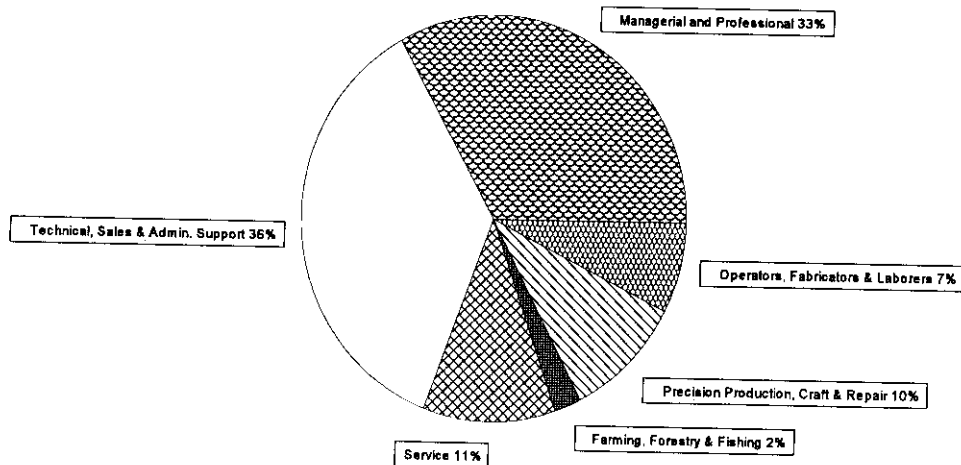
The Census also provides a different analysis of the labor force by occupational specialty (managerial,

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<sup>1</sup> A major portion of employees are being relocated to Lansdowne

clerical, laborer, etc.). That breakdown of Leesburg's resident workers in 1990 is shown in Figure 4.2. As the chart indicates, 69 percent of workers residing in Leesburg had occupations classified under the two "white collar" components--managerial/professional and technical/sales/administrative support.

**Figure 4.2  
Occupational Mix  
of the Labor Force (1990)**



### Commuters

Long-distance commuting is less common among Leesburg residents than for Northern Virginians generally. According to the 1990 Census, the majority of workers living in Leesburg worked either in the town or Loudoun County, and almost two out of five worked in Leesburg itself. Table 4.2 compares commuting data for Leesburg with that for the county and the region. Of Leesburg residents working out of state, 73 percent commuted to Washington, DC. For Loudoun County residents the figure was 83 percent.

**Table 4.2  
Place of Work of Resident Labor Force (1990)**

Job Location	Leesburg Residents	Loudoun County Residents	Northern Virginia Residents
Town of Leesburg	38.50%	N/A	N/A
County (including town)	59.00%	42.60%	42.10%
Outside county but in Virginia	33.60%	44.90%	31.10%
Outside Virginia	7.40%	12.50%	26.80%

Source: U.S. Census 1990

The source of commuters coming to work in Leesburg cannot be established from available data. However, it can be deduced from the Census statistics that 3,698 Leesburg residents held jobs in Leesburg in 1990, accounting for 36 percent of the job base. Conversely, 64 percent of persons employed in Leesburg--about 6,646 workers--lived outside the town.

## **EMPLOYMENT AND LABOR FORCE PROJECTIONS**

### **Employment**

Leesburg's continuing strength as an employment center is seen in the upward trend of three population-related indicators: the ratio of jobs to (1) population, (2) households, and (3) size of the resident labor force. We should strive to maintain these ratios. However, all three ratios increased between 1980 and 1990 and remained significantly higher than those for Loudoun County and the region generally.

The direction of Leesburg's economy is strongly influenced by the same forces and trends that affect the economy of the metropolitan region. For that reason, the employment projections developed by Loudoun County and the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments as part of COG's Cooperative Forecasting program are used as the basis for the projections presented here for Leesburg.

While it may be assumed that the shape of Leesburg's economy will more or less reflect the region, there remains the question whether the town will retain its relative share of the employment base. The fact that it did so in the face of strong competitive growth in other jurisdictions during the 1980-1990 decade is a positive indicator. Additionally, population growth in itself generates jobs--primarily in the services, trade, and government sectors. While the relative size of the government sector is expected to decline in coming years, employment in services and trade should grow with population. In this respect, Leesburg faces the future from an already strong position. As of the end of 1993, for example, almost half of Loudoun County's retail center space (shopping centers with 10,000 or more square feet of leasable area) was located in Leesburg. The town and county's two largest centers, Battlefield Shopping Center and Leesburg Plaza, had more than a fourth of the county's 2.25 million square feet of retail center space. Nevertheless, the town has the potential to maintain a leading position with an additional 2 million square feet of new retail space that is approved but not built. (See summary of proposed development in Table 6.3.)

The town also has the capacity to support substantial growth in non-retail employment with about 4 million square feet of additional office space that has preliminary approval for development. This as yet unbuilt commercial space, retail and office together, could accommodate as many as 18,800 new employees (based on current average space utilization of 300 square feet per office employee and 358 square feet per retail employee). In addition, the town has more than 3 million square feet of potential industrial development with preliminary approval. This could range from manufacturing to warehousing, with widely varying employee densities; it might accommodate up to another 14,000 employees. All told, proposed non-residential development in Leesburg would have the capacity to increase the local job base (including existing employment) to more than 43,000 over the next 20 to 30 years. Potential annexation of Urban Growth Area land projected for employment-generating development, particularly in the Dulles Toll Road corridor, could boost this number even higher.

The employment projections in Table 4.3 are derived from the county/COG projections for Loudoun County and are based on two assumptions:

- Leesburg will retain about a 25 percent share of the county's total employment.

- The town's jobs-to-population ratio will remain at least equal to or higher than that for the region as a whole.

County employment projections are developed for three levels of growth: low, intermediate, and high. The Leesburg projections use the county's intermediate forecast.

**Table 4.3**  
**At-Place Employment in Leesburg:**  
**Cumulative Projections**

Year	Loudoun County	Leesburg
1990	39,587	10,344
1995	48,900	12,200
2000	60,400	15,100
2005	72,700	18,200
2010	85,800	21,500
2015	99,800	25,000

Source: Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments  
and Town of Leesburg Planning Department

Realization of this forecast will require an aggressive economic development effort by the town. Diversification is key to a stable economy, and much of the proposed non-residential development in Leesburg would produce space suitable for diversifying growth in the town's employment base--corporate office, research and development, light manufacturing, etc. However, overbuilding in Northern Virginia during the 1980's produced a surplus of this type of space that may take several years to absorb. This vacant space could well siphon off new or expanding business development from Leesburg, where comparable space is planned but not yet built.

### **Labor Force**

During the 1970's and 1980's, labor force participation by Leesburg's employment-eligible population (those 16 and older) rose significantly, reflecting the national trend. That trend was directly related to the dramatic increase of women in the work force. Both trends are leveling off. By 1990, women constituted nearly half of Leesburg's labor force, and their 71% participation rate was approaching the overall participation rate of 79%. It is therefore anticipated that women joining the labor force will have a much smaller impact on the participation rate in future years. Other demographic factors, such as the size of the 16-and-older age cohort and the proportion of retirement-age persons, are likely to have as much impact on the size of the labor force.

The job to household ratio, an indicator of the balance between the number of jobs and households in an area is one to one (1:1). This ratio indicates that for every household in the town, there is one job in the town. Since there is often more than one worker in a household, it would be desirable to have more than one job per household.

The labor force projections presented in Table 4.4 are proportional to the population projections and assume that the participation rate of persons 16 years of age and older will remain in the area of 79%.



**Table 4.4**  
**Projected Labor Force Residing in Leesburg**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Total Labor Force</b>
1990	9,844
1995	12,600
2000	15,600
2005	18,800
2010	21,900
2015	25,300

### **ECONOMIC RESOURCES**

The preceding section described the existing economy of Leesburg in terms of the employment base. It also described the potential for growth represented by commercial, office, and industrial development that has been approved or proposed but is not yet built. That proposed development will only occur in response to market demand--i.e., growth of the business sector in Leesburg. This section examines the town's resources for promoting economic growth.

#### **Physical Resources**

The physical assets that support economic growth include developable land, existing buildings ready for occupancy, and infrastructure such as utility service and an accessible transportation network.

##### **Land**

Vacant land that is appropriately zoned and buildable must be available for new development. A variety of sites with different characteristics should be available to meet the different needs of potential purchasers. These can include raw land, improved sites such as business parks, and previously developed sites suitable for redevelopment or new uses.

Leesburg has about 800 acres of vacant land zoned for commercial, office, and industrial uses. The town has already given at least preliminary approval to development concepts for these parcels, including office and business/industrial parks. Within the existing commercial areas of the town (the East Market Street, Fort Evans Road, and Catoctin Circle corridors) there are a number of available sites that are either vacant or suitable for redevelopment.

##### **Buildings**

Buildings on developed sites should be available for immediate occupancy by new firms moving into the area as well as local businesses that want to expand into a larger facility.

### Infrastructure

Water and sewer service, and other utilities such as electricity, natural gas, and telecommunications, should be readily available to serve potential business sites.

The town's water and sewer plants have present or expandable capacity to serve all proposed development. Trunk lines for both systems are in place to serve all parts of town, except for sewer interceptors serving the eastern undeveloped area north of Route 7. The portion of Leesburg's Urban Growth Area southeast of town, which is slated for business development, would need sewer and water infrastructure.

### Transportation

An efficient highway network as well as air and rail service should be conveniently available to provide access for workers, clients, and shipping. Additionally, the availability of public transportation to bring workers to places of employment can be an important factor in business location decisions.

Leesburg is well situated in the regional highway. Improvements planned for Route 7 and completion of the Dulles Toll Road extension will promote efficient road connections with the metropolitan core to the east and the Interstate 81 corridor to the west. Leesburg has excellent air access, via both Washington Dulles International Airport and the town's own municipal airport. The Dulles Toll Road extension is designed to accommodate future rail transit in the median.

## **HUMAN RESOURCES**

The human resources of a community consist of the combined skills and knowledge of its residents. The economic potential of a community depends to a large degree on the availability of a competent, highly trained work force at competitive wage scales.

### **Existing Labor Force**

The skills found in the existing work force not only reflect the needs of existing employers but also constitute an important resource for employment expansion. New businesses may be spun off of existing employers or may be attracted to the area by the opportunity to locate near similar businesses and thereby benefit from the existing skilled work force, suppliers and services.

Leesburg's existing work force can be defined in two ways: (1) the people who *work* in Leesburg, or (2) the working people who *live* in Leesburg. As noted earlier in this element, about 60 percent of Leesburg residents who are in the labor force work outside the town, and 64 percent of the people who hold jobs in Leesburg live elsewhere. This does not necessarily signify a mismatch between residents and jobs available locally. As Figure 4.1 shows, there is a striking similarity between the distributions of the local job base and the resident labor force across the range of labor classifications. Both are service-oriented, although the resident labor force is somewhat more diversified. Both serve as a source of potential workers for new or expanding businesses in Leesburg. In addition, employers could also tap into the existing pool of workers available in the region generally. Because the unemployment rate in both Loudoun and the region is relatively low (under 4%), employers would likely need to attract some workers away from their present jobs or else bring them here from outside the region.

### **Wage Rates**

Wage rates are an important factor in employer decisions about establishing or expanding operations in a particular location. Wage rates in Northern Virginia and in the Washington metropolitan area generally are relatively high. However, Loudoun County is competitive within the region and, by virtue of its location in the outer suburban ring, is able to attract appropriately skilled workers for employment in such activities as light industry from outlying areas. It is also of note that Virginia is the northernmost right-to-work state, a factor which could influence employer's location decisions within the metropolitan region.

### **Education and Training**

Education and training receive great emphasis in today's economy. It is in the community's interest to promote high quality education at all levels and the development of a work force that can compete with other communities.

Leesburg's schools are part of the Loudoun County school system, which annually ranks in the top 10 percent of Virginia's 140 school systems in nationally normed achievement and ability test scores. More than 80 percent of Loudoun graduates continue formal education and 70 percent go on to college. The county's education program also includes excellent non-academic training for 11th and 12th grade students at the C. S. Monroe Technology Center in Leesburg.

The town is fortunate to be located in a region that offers a wide range of advanced education and training opportunities. These include a growing number of colleges and universities, both public and private, as well as technical institutes and professional schools. Also, the Virginia Department of Economic Development offers on-site training programs targeted to industrial users.

## **FINANCIAL RESOURCES**

Public fiscal policy and private financing sources are essential components of the local economy. The first is important because it involves taxation and the ability of the town to provide public facilities and services. The second affects the ability of the business community to secure adequate financing for startup or expansion activities.

### **Public Fiscal Policy**

Leesburg's public finance policies and goals are detailed in Element Five, *Public Services*. Town revenues are generated through local taxes, user charges and fees, rents, and inter-governmental transfers. Some services, such as sewer and water and operation of the municipal airport, are financed through fees and charges paid by users into self-supporting "enterprise" funds. These fees and charges also finance facility improvements and expansion. The remainder of town services, such as police protection and solid waste disposal, are financed through the town's general fund.

About two-thirds of the town's general fund revenues come from taxes. The town seeks diversification of its tax base to prevent over-reliance on a single source and to distribute the tax burden fairly. The town

currently relies heavily on residential property for its tax base which is now about equal to consumer tax revenue. Property owners are taxed both by the town and by Loudoun County. At the present time, these combined property taxes for single-family homeowners in Leesburg are substantially less than in other Northern Virginia towns of comparable size. However, there is growing concern in the town and county that the rapid pace of residential development, without concurrent non-residential growth, may impose an onerous tax burden on homeowners to pay for additional services and public facilities, especially schools.

### **Private Financing**

The business community requires adequate sources of capital to finance expansion of existing businesses, as well as seed, startup or venture capital to establish new businesses. The banking industry has undergone extensive consolidation and restructuring in recent years, with the result that Leesburg and the region generally are served by sound financial institutions that are willing and able to meet the needs of business customers.

## **COMMUNITY RESOURCES**

### **Overview**

Central to a community's ability to attract new business is the perception of that community as a place to live. This "quality of life" factor is derived primarily from the community's physical, social and cultural characteristics.

- Leesburg has many advantages that afford a high quality of life:
- An attractive and well-kept physical environment
- Excellent public schools and higher education opportunities
- A variety of housing available
- A low crime rate
- Ready access to government services
- Superior parks and recreation facilities
- A broad variety of retail goods and services
- Excellent medical services
- A wide range of cultural activities, available both locally and throughout the region
- A well-educated and civically involved populace

These attributes, and the town's goals and policies regarding them, are addressed in detail elsewhere in this plan. This discussion focuses on the economic growth implications of three of them.

### **Government Services**

Leesburg's role as county seat has historically influenced the mix of its economy, as evidenced by the number of law firms and other professional or technical services that do business with government agencies.

Having outgrown the central administrative building next to the courthouse, until recently, county staff operated out of leased space at scattered locations around town. In 1996, County staff moved into a new 158,000 square foot government center on Harrison Street SE.

## **Airport**

One of the facilities that characterize the Town's commitment to commerce in the next generation is Leesburg Airport, also known as Godfrey Field. Just 30 miles from Washington, DC and only about a mile from downtown Leesburg, the airport is situated next to the new Dulles Greenway Toll Road, an easy, comfortable express route to the metro area and the Northern Virginia commercial locations along the way. The airport has an FAA Automated Flight Service Station (AFSS) located on the field for 24-hour weather briefings as well as professional flight schools for fulfilling training requirements ranging from single engine, two-seat trainers through multi-engine. Individuals and groups can charter jet aircraft for intercontinental or international destinations.

Services include piston and turbine maintenance, parts department, avionics shop, aircraft sales, charter, and 100LL and Jet A fuel. Designated by the FAA as a Reliever Airport for Dulles International, the airport boasts a 5,500-foot runway, and three non-precision instrument approaches with plans for a precision approach in the future.

It is a town priority to assure the continued growth and vitality of the airport through compatible development in the vicinity of the airport, as well as promoting functional improvements and cost effective development within the airport.

## **Educational Opportunities**

Trade and higher educational opportunities are plentiful within and near the town. A branch of Shenandoah University is located within the town. A branch of George Washington University, Strayer College, Marymount University, and the Loudoun County campus of Northern Virginia Community College are located east of Leesburg on Route 7.

## **Cultural Activities**

Leesburg residents have access to a comprehensive range of cultural events and activities in Washington, D.C. and throughout the metropolitan area. Locally generated cultural activities have primarily taken the form of festivals and events focused on the special character and traditions of the Leesburg area--August Court Days, the Bluemont Concert Series, Historic Garden Week, Revolutionary and Civil War battle re-enactments, First Night Leesburg, equestrian activities, and community based concerts. There is growing interest and participation in the visual and performing arts through the Loudoun Community Orchestra, Loudoun Chorale, Loudoun Ballet, commercial art galleries and instruction centers.

As Leesburg's population grows, so will the level of demand for cultural opportunities within the community on a sustained and regular basis. Such activities can draw added support from the thousands of tourists per year visiting Leesburg and the historic attractions in our immediate vicinity, and can at the same time serve to attract additional visitors.

### **INSTITUTIONAL RESOURCES**

There are many institutional entities, both public and private, that influence the course of economic activity in Leesburg. They include government agencies, financial organizations, educational systems and institutions, and a broad range of professional and trade organizations. Together, they form a network of common or complementary interests that can play a leading role in pursuing economic goals.

A number of these organizations perform specific functions relating to economic development: for example, business promotion, collecting and disseminating information, sharing expertise, and fostering community cooperation. The town's efforts in these areas are assigned to the Department of Economic Development, a staff agency established in 1993, and the Leesburg Economic Development Commission, a Council-appointed body which advises the department and Council on economic development issues and policies.

Other agencies with an interest in economic development in the Leesburg area and the region include:

- Virginia Department of Business Assistance
- Virginia Economic Development Partnership
- Greater Washington Board of Trade
- Greater Washington Initiative
- Washington Airports Task Force
- Center for Innovative Technology
- National Association of Industrial and Office Parks
- Northern Virginia Building Industry Association
- Northern Virginia Economic Development Coalition
- Northern Virginia Technology Council
- Loudoun County Department of Economic Development
- Loudoun Tourism Council
- Loudoun County Chamber of Commerce
- Loudoun County Small Business Development Center
- Dulles Area Association of Realtors

These government and private organizations offer a diversity of resources for dealing with economic challenges and opportunities. By working in consultation and cooperation with these and similar institutions, the town is better able to address regional problems that have local impact, avoid potential conflicts with other jurisdictions' efforts, and capitalize on a wealth of ideas, information and expertise.

The town also has a special responsibility to its citizens with respect to economic development. That is to assure that development is not pursued at the community's expense in terms of the cost and level of public services and overall quality of life. The town can enlist the support and participation of elements of the institutional network in seeking a proper balance--for example, in promoting awareness of the town's general goals and in identifying and targeting new businesses that are compatible with those goals. The town can also promote a proper balance in its regulatory activities by involving institutional sources, particularly those representing affected private sector interests, in the development of regulations and the processes for implementing them.

## **GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

### **Goals**

- Retain and expand a diversified economic structure and employment base.
- Create job opportunities to meet the present and future needs of the Town of Leesburg.
- Sustain the town's fiscal health through a diverse and expanding commercial tax base.
- Promote the viability of the historic downtown business district.
- Maintain Leesburg's role as the county's governmental center.
- Enhance Leesburg's position as a tourist, conference, and commercial center for Loudoun County and the region.

### **Objectives**

- Maintain adequate capacity in public utility systems to serve projected growth.
- Plan for the provision of public utilities and transportation facilities in areas planned for employment uses
- Maintain an adequate level of service in the transportation network
- Promote a diverse transportation system
- Ensure adequate and suitable land is available for commercial and industrial uses
- Use the skills of the local work force as an economic development marketing tool
- Capitalize on existing employment strengths to attract additional employment
- Ensure town revenues are sufficient to support desired public service levels and to build public facilities when needed
- Make adequate financial resources available for business startup and expansion
- Maintain an attractive physical environment and quality of life in the town
- Promote an active and constructive role for town government in economic development
- Foster a good relationship between town government and local businesses
- Recruit businesses that are compatible with town objectives
- Establish a business retention program to encourage the maintenance and expansion of existing firms.
- Monitor the cost of doing business in Leesburg to ensure that the town remains competitive with other jurisdictions
- Create a positive business environment through efficient development review and the granting of permits, a customer service orientation and greater interaction with the business community
- Ensure sufficient infrastructure to maintain and enhance the quality of services to existing business and to accommodate new business development
- Assure the continued growth and vitality of the airport through compatible development in the vicinity of the airport, as well as promoting functional improvements and cost effective development within the airport.

**IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM**

**Policies**

1. The town will continue to plan for, design and schedule water and sewage treatment capacity expansions to serve projected growth in its capital improvements program.
2. The town will maintain adequate funding sources to implement the capital improvements program.
3. Water and sewer lines and transportation facilities will be sized with adequate capacity to serve projected needs.
4. The town will schedule replacement of inadequately sized utility infrastructure in older developed areas.
5. The town will ensure that water and sewer line extensions and road improvements to be undertaken by the development community are coordinated with the town's capital improvements program.
6. The town will encourage the placement of existing overhead utility lines placed underground, especially in the Old and Historic District and along entrance corridors.
7. The town will promote installation of fiber-optic cable lines to and within new development sites.
8. The town will ensure planned transportation system improvements are implemented concurrently and commensurate with increased traffic demand caused by development.
9. The town will develop alternative transportation modes (rail and bus transit, bicycle and pedestrian ways) as a means of increasing capacity of the transportation network.
10. The town will establish land use and development patterns which link residential and non-residential uses so as to promote alternative transportation modes.
11. The town will work with the state and other appropriate agencies to establish regional and local bus service.
12. The town will plan for eventual rail service in the median of the Dulles Toll Road extension.
13. The town will continue to encourage and recognize business and education partnerships.
14. The town will attempt to maintain a lower property tax rate relative to competing municipalities.
15. The town will encourage expansion of the availability of cultural facilities, programs and events.
16. To promote the vitality of the downtown area, the town will encourage compatible development or redevelopment and adaptive reuse in the Old and Historic District.
17. The town will undertake a leadership role in economic development through specific programs, policies and activities recommended by the Economic Development Commission.
18. The town will establish policy to promote mixed use development in historic downtown, emphasizing specialty retail and entertainment.
19. In order to promote the historic downtown area as a distinct and unique area of town, a uniform lighting plan will be developed and installed.
20. The town will review its current practices requiring buffering and landscaping and will strive to attain a balance between aesthetic considerations and business/economic needs.



21. The town will periodically review the sign ordinance to assure sensitivity to changing economic conditions.
22. The town supports linkage of the W & OD Trail with the historic downtown area and the C & O Canal to encourage pedestrian and bike traffic in the town.
23. The town will encourage the development of a central open air market incorporating elements from farmer's markets, antique fairs and craft fairs.
24. The town will establish an action plan to market Leesburg Municipal Airport.
25. The town should encourage financial institutions and economic development agencies to offer favorable financing arrangements for local businesses.
26. The town will promote development regulations and developments that further the efficient use of the airport in areas contiguous to, and within the noise contours of, the airport.

### **Action Program**

The following actions are recommended to help implement the town's economic development objectives over the next three to five years.

1. Identify, plan and design utility system improvements and extensions that will be required to serve areas designated for business development, both in the town and in the Urban Growth Area.
2. Explore financing options for installing basic infrastructure (sewer and water trunk lines, essential roads such as Battlefield Parkway) as an incentive to business development, with costs recovered as development occurs.
3. Complete master plan objectives for the municipal airport.
4. Endorse the concept of the preparation of a study by others addressing the market feasibility, design, size and location of a conference/convention facility in Loudoun County within or convenient to Leesburg.

### **Annual Economic Development Element Review Criteria**

In order to evaluate the effectiveness of town policies and regulations concerning economic development, track annually:

- Job-to-household and job-to-resident ratios
- Acres of rezonings to non-residential compared to residential zoning districts
- Square feet of non-residential construction compared to residential construction
- Proportion of town revenues generated by non-residential uses
- Per-capita jobs added
- Average salary per job added
- Rate of business turnovers
- Comparison of above with surrounding jurisdictions and the region